

National Park Service

Santa Monica Mountains

National Recreation Area



# ZUMA/TRANCAS CANYONS



*uma! It is derived from the Chumash word for “abundance.” Certainly, Zuma and neighboring Trancas Canyons satisfy this description. The perennial streams running through these canyons give rise to an abundance of animal and plant life. These same natural resources have influenced and given rise to a long and rich cultural history.*

While venturing through the canyons, look and listen for the signs of life around you. Walk carefully along the trails and discover tracks of deer, rabbit and coyote. Marvel at the delicate homes of funnel web spiders hiding in the earth’s tiny crevices. Listen for the shy wren-tit, the “voice of the chaparral.” Though rarely seen, its call sounds like a ping-pong ball echoing throughout the canyon.

For more than 10,000 years, Zuma and Trancas Canyons have been home to animal, plant and human communities. Chumash ancestors walked here, gathering food and materials for tools and shelter. During the Spanish period (1769-1848), a Mexican Land Grant united the canyons for the first time under one name—*Rancho Topanga Malibu Sequit*. The 13,330 acre grant included coastal areas from Santa Monica to Point Mugu.

Frederick and May Rindge bought the property in 1892 and renamed it *Rancho Malibu*. They adopted a policy of no through roads and no right-of-way granted to trespassers. May Rindge continued this policy after her husband’s death. As the legendary “Queen of Malibu,” she depleted her fortune while trying to maintain the integrity of her property. Still, after twenty years, the U.S. Supreme Court forced her to allow the Pacific Coast Highway through her ranch.

This scenic highway made the area more accessible to a greater population, forever changing California’s coast. However, Zuma and Trancas Canyons remained minimally developed. Throughout their history, these canyons have had many names, many residents, and many owners. Preserved by the National Park Service, their *zuma* or their abundance of resources and beauty remain for you to experience.



**National Park Service**  
Santa Monica Mountains  
National Recreation Area  
401 West Hillcrest Drive  
Thousand Oaks CA 91360  
[www.nps.gov/samo](http://www.nps.gov/samo)

Visitor Center 805-370-2301  
In emergency: dial 911

## Information & Safety

**Natural and historic features** are protected by law and may not be collected.

**Dogs** must be on a leash at all times and stay on designated trails. For the health and consideration of others, clean up after your pet.

**Firearms** are not allowed on public lands in Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

**Fire** is a constant danger. Smoking is not permitted during times of high fire danger. Open fires are prohibited.

**Horseback riders** should communicate with passing hikers and bicyclists, letting them know how to pass. Let others know when you wish to pass, and do so on the left. Horses should not graze or leave the trail. Remove manure from parking areas.

**Hikers** must yield to horseback riders. **Bicyclists** must ride courteously and yield to hikers and horseback riders.

**Trail closures** will be in effect during and following significant rainfall to protect park resources. Trails will be re-opened when dry enough to sustain public use.

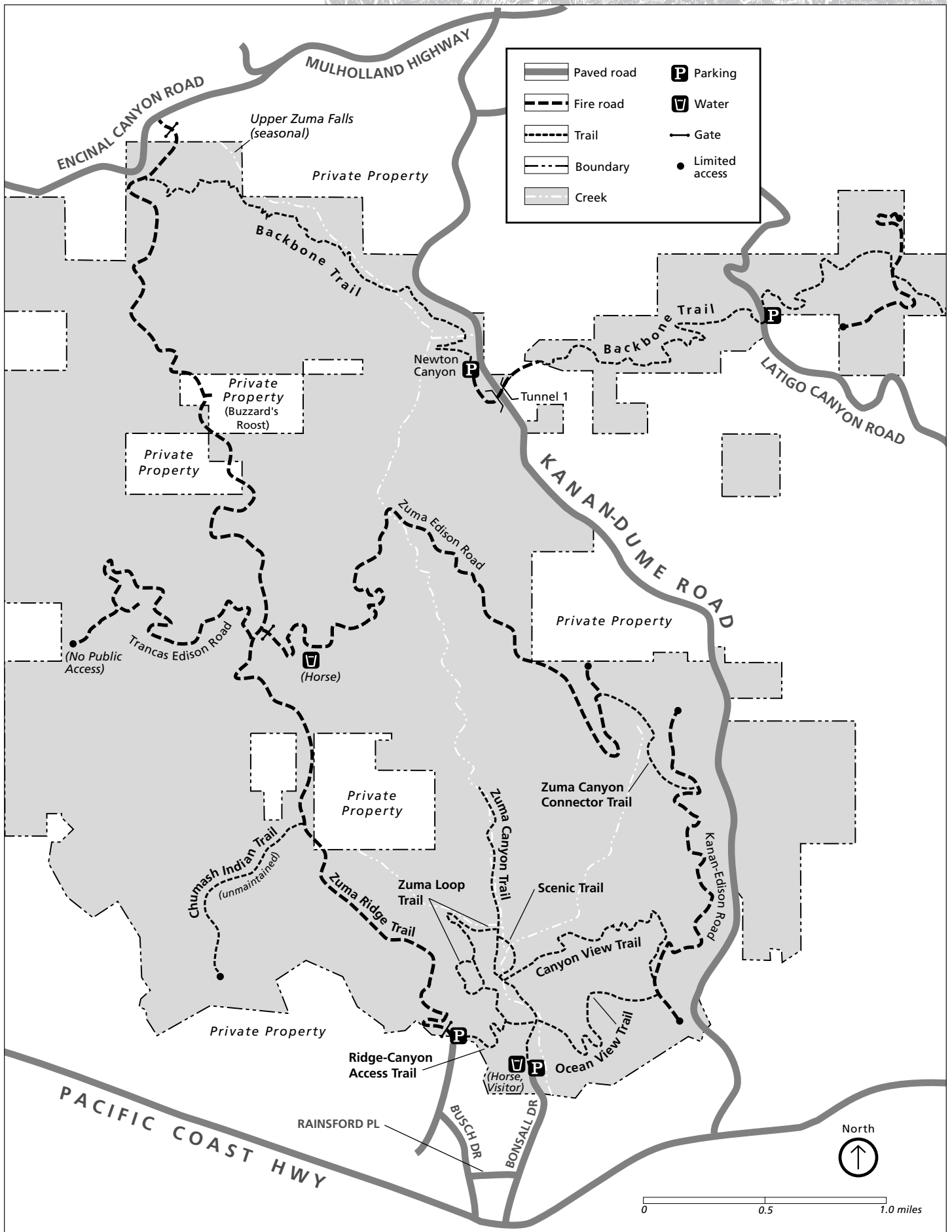
**Stay on established trails** and off of private property.

Learn to recognize and be alert for **ticks, bees, rattlesnakes, and poison oak**.

**Motorized vehicles** are not permitted on trails or fire roads.

**Water** from streams and ponds is not safe to drink, due to possible contamination or the presence of the giardia protozoan.

# ZUMA/TRANCAS CANYONS



## Trails

**Ocean View Trail and Canyon View Trail** 3-mile loop, moderate; no bikes—These trails extend from the Zuma Canyon Trail and wind through chaparral vegetation, offering good views of the ocean and the canyon floor. The trails also pass through a coastal sage scrub community. The partially woody shrubs are sometimes called “soft chaparral” because of their flexible leaves and stems.

**Zuma Loop Trail** 2 miles, easy; no bikes—Traveling along the base of Zuma Canyon, this

trail features large and graceful sycamore, oak, willow and black walnut trees in a rare hardwood riparian environment. Also discover dry wash plant communities. These delicate looking plants have the ability to bend under the weight of raging waters, ensuring their survival year after year.

**Backbone Trail** 2.5 miles to Zuma Ridge Trail, easy to moderate—This trail begins at the Newton Canyon Parking Lot on Kanan-Dume Road. The winding trail leads to a view of the

Upper Zuma Falls, which are especially grand after the winter rains. Watch out for poison oak along wet areas.

**Zuma Ridge Trail** 6 miles, moderate to strenuous—Beginning at the Busch Drive parking lot, this fire road ascends to Encinal Canyon Road and along the ridge between Zuma and Trancas Canyons. Don’t forget to look around and enjoy the views of the ocean. Joined together, this large area is a core habitat providing enough shelter, food, water and space for a variety of plant and animal life.